MANIFESTO ON THE KATECHON,

ON THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX TSAR,

AND ON TWO KINDS OF PROPHECIES CONCERNING HIM:

THE TRUE — FROM THE ANCIENT ORTHODOX SAINTS,
AND THE PERMITTED — GIVEN TO THOSE WHO ERR IN TRADITION,
SO THAT EVEN THEY MIGHT BELIEVE IN THE COMING TSAR-KATECHON

With testimonies from Holy Scripture, the Ecumenical Councils, the Ancient Orthodox Tradition, and the prophecies of the saints

PREFACE. ON THE TWO KINDS OF PROPHECIES

This Manifesto is devoted to one of the greatest mysteries of God's providence concerning Russia — the mystery of the Katechon, the Restrainer, and the coming Orthodox Tsar. But before speaking of the prophecies themselves, it is necessary to establish the theological framework without which it is impossible to rightly understand any of them.

Prophecies concerning the Russian Tsar come from two sources that are fundamentally different in their nature. The first is the true prophets: saints who belonged to the undamaged apostolic Tradition, keepers of ancient Orthodox piety, confessors and martyrs who bore witness to the Truth at the cost of their lives. The second is the ascetics and hierarchs who lived already within the framework of the New Rite Church — that is, the church which had accepted the Nikonian reforms and thereby departed from the fullness of the Tradition.

How are we to understand prophecies of the second kind? What is required here is clear theological discernment, free from blanket dismissal. The answer is this: God's providence permitted even these — those erring in tradition — to proclaim the coming Orthodox Tsar-Katechon. Not in order to confirm the validity of their hierarchy, but so that their followers too, abiding in error regarding the Nikonian reform, might have faith

in the coming Orthodox Tsar-Katechon. For the Truth about the Tsar is so great and so necessary that the Lord permits it to sound even through damaged vessels.

This is precisely what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote: "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will... notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice" (Phil. 1:15–18). The Lord knows how to draw forth seeds of Truth even from imperfect vessels.

CHAPTER I. THE KATECHON — THE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FROM SCRIPTURE AND THE COUNCILS

1.1. The Apostle Paul on the Katechon

The concept of the Katechon — the Restrainer — derives from the Second Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians: "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (2 Thess. 2:6–7). The mystery of iniquity is already at work — but its full revelation is being restrained. When the Restrainer is taken away — the Antichrist will be revealed.

The ancient interpreters of Scripture connected the Katechon with God-established Orthodox statehood. Blessed Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Saint John Chrysostom, and Blessed Theophylact of Bulgaria all saw in the Katechon the Orthodox kingdom as a barrier against lawlessness — not simply any state, but a state which sets as its purpose the preservation of Truth and the Church of Christ.

1.2. The Transfer of the Katechon: Rome — Constantinople — Moscow

When the first Rome fell into Latin heresy through the Filioque and papal presumption, the succession of the Katechon passed to Orthodox Constantinople, the Second Rome. When the Second Rome fell in 1453, this was preceded by its spiritual weakening through attempts to conclude union with the papacy at the Council of Florence (1439). The state betrayed the Truth — and fell.

The monk Philotheus of Pskov, in his epistles to Grand Prince Vasily III around 1523, set forth this understanding of history: "Attend and take heed, O pious Tsar, that all the kingdoms of the Christian faith have converged into thine alone, that two Romes have fallen, and the third stands, and a fourth there shall not be." Moscow — the Third Rome — became the last repository of the undamaged apostolic faith and the last barrier on the path of the Antichrist.

1.3. The Condition of the Katechon — Faithfulness to the Tradition

The Katechon operates only as long as the kingdom preserves the undamaged apostolic faith. This is precisely why the Nikonian schism of the mid-seventeenth century is not merely a church reform — it is the beginning of the weakening of the Katechon from within. The two-fingered sign of the Cross was changed, the name Isus was altered, the order of the liturgy was reformed — the very things confirmed by the Council of the Hundred Chapters (Stoglav, 1551) as apostolic Tradition. The seeds of the catastrophe of 1917 were sown precisely then — two and a half centuries before its fulfilment.

CHAPTER II. THE TRUE PROPHECIES — FROM THE ANCIENT ORTHODOX SAINTS

The true prophets are those who preserved the undamaged apostolic Tradition not formally but through their lives, their confessorship, and when necessary their martyrdom. The Apostle John gave the criterion: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1). To try the spirit is to try its faithfulness to the Tradition.

2.1. The Saints of the Pre-Nikonian Era

Venerable Alexander of Svir (1448–1533)

The Venerable Alexander of Svir lived in the era of the fullness of ancient Orthodox piety — before the Nikonian schism, before Western influences, before the Synodal reforms. He was vouchsafed a vision of the Holy Trinity Itself in the form of Three Men — the only such occurrence in Russian sanctity since the Old Testament Abraham. His prophecies concerning the fate of Russia spoke of great trials to come upon

her for the sin of apostasy, but affirmed that the Lord would not forsake His portion in which the true faith is preserved.

Blessed Basil of Moscow (died 1557)

Saint Basil the Blessed lived under Tsar Ivan the Terrible — in the era of the Council of the Hundred Chapters, which solemnly confirmed the ancient Orthodox rites as the only true ones. His gift of foresight, his boldness before tsars, his discernment of hidden things — all these are the fruits of genuine grace acting in a man who wholly preserved the apostolic Tradition. His prophecies spoke of Moscow's significance as the last repository of Truth, and of the condition of that keeping — faithfulness to God and His Tradition.

Venerable Irinarkh the Recluse of Rostov (1548–1628)

The Venerable Irinarkh lived during the Time of Troubles. He prophetically foretold the victory of the Orthodox militia over the Polish invaders and blessed Minin and Pozharsky for the liberation of Moscow. His life of seclusion, his iron chains, his faithfulness to ancient Orthodox piety — all are witnesses to true sanctity. His prophetic testimony was this: Russia will endure as long as her tsars and people remain faithful to God and His Truth. Departure from the Truth inevitably brings punishment.

2.2. Hieromartvr Archpriest Avvakum (1620–1682) — Prophet of the Katechon

Archpriest Avvakum is the greatest confessor after the Nikonian schism, burned in a log prison at Pustozersk for his faithfulness to the apostolic Tradition. His prophetic vision was clear and unsparing: Russia forfeited the power of the Katechon at the moment when her tsars and hierarchs departed from the Tradition. He wrote: "Woe, woe, O Russia, that thou hast come to love the Latin proverb!" — in the Nikonian reforms he saw precisely Western, Latin influence penetrating to the very heart of the Church.

His prophecy concerning the Tsar is a prophecy of a tsar-confessor who will not build his kingdom upon departure from the Tradition, but will restore it. This is the only possible foundation of the true Katechon. "I will not surrender a single stroke from the Tradition of the Holy Fathers who laid down their souls for it" — these words of Avvakum are both prophecy and testament.

2.3. Old Believer Prophecies of the White Tsar

The ancient Orthodox tradition has preserved the image of the White Tsar — the coming Orthodox sovereign who will restore the true Church and protect the keepers of the Tradition. This Tsar is conceived not as the restorer of the Synodal system, but as the restorer of the Tradition itself — of that which was destroyed by Nikon. This is the essential distinction from all later New Rite prophecies about the Tsar: there the Tsar is the defender of the already-existing reformed church. Here the Tsar is the restorer of what was destroyed by the reform. These are two different Tsars and two different Katechons.

CHAPTER III. PROPHECIES PERMITTED TO THOSE WHO ERR IN TRADITION — SO THAT EVEN THEY MIGHT BELIEVE IN THE TSAR

Now comes the most important and theologically subtle point. There exist prophecies about the Russian Tsar belonging to people who lived within the framework of the Nikonian New Rite tradition — the Synodal Church that existed without a patriarch, on the basis of reformed worship, with the three-fingered sign of the Cross instead of the two-fingered, with the name Iisus instead of Isus.

Why did the Lord permit even these — those erring in tradition through their departure from the Tradition — to proclaim the coming Orthodox Tsar? The answer is providential and profound: so that their followers too, abiding in error concerning the legitimacy of the Nikonian reform, might have firm faith in the Tsar-Katechon. The Lord desires that all — even those who have accepted the reformed Orthodoxy — should be prepared to receive this great Truth. For when the true Tsar comes, he will come for all — and both those faithful to the Tradition and those who have departed from it must be capable of recognising him.

This is the wonder and mystery of providence: the Truth about the Tsar is so great that it passes through every barrier. As sunlight penetrates even dusty glass — it illuminates nonetheless, though not in full strength. These prophecies carry a portion of the Truth — that portion of it which even those who departed from the Tradition could not hold back, for the very nature of the Orthodox kingdom demands its proclamation.

3.1. Seraphim of Sarov (1754–1833)

The Venerable Seraphim of Sarov lived in the era of Synodal Orthodoxy — a century after the Nikonian schism, in a church without a patriarch, governed by a state official. His personal piety, his ascetic labours, his love for people — all these are real. But his hierarchical belonging is a belonging to the already-reformed tradition.

Yet he prophesied concerning the Tsar. His words — that Russia would arise, that a Tsar would appear who would astonish the whole world by his Orthodoxy, that a great spiritual renewal would come — resound to this day, and millions believe them. It is precisely for these millions that they were permitted: so that they, who trust Seraphim as their saint, might through his prophecies come to faith in the Tsar-Katechon and be prepared to receive him when he comes.

3.2. John of Kronstadt (1829–1909)

The Holy Righteous John of Kronstadt was a fervent man of prayer and a rebuker of the revolutionary spirit. His foreknowledge of the catastrophe of 1917 was precise: "The Russian Kingdom is wavering, tottering, near to collapse" — and this came to pass. His prophecies concerning the revival of Russia and the Orthodox kingdom are addressed to his followers — and were permitted by the Lord precisely for them.

Through John of Kronstadt, those were called to faith in the Tsar who would not otherwise have heard this call — millions of believers within the Synodal tradition. The seed of faith in the Katechon was cast into their hearts by God's providence: so that when the true Tsar comes, they might recognise and receive him, and not reject him as a stranger.

3.3. Theophan of Poltava (1874–1940)

Archbishop Theophan of Poltava withdrew into seclusion, refused church politics, and prophesied concerning the restoration of Russia. His words about the Tsar — "not from the reigning House of Romanov, but Orthodox" — became among the most cited of all prophecies about the coming sovereign. He suffered, lived in poverty, and avoided compromise. And through him God's providence permitted testimony concerning the Tsar

— precisely for those who honour him as their pastor. So that they too, abiding within the New Rite tradition, might be prepared to receive the true Orthodox Tsar who — when he comes as the true Katechon — will restore not the Synodal system, but the Tradition of the Apostles itself.

3.4. Paisius Velichkovsky (1722–1794)

The Venerable Paisius Velichkovsky was the renewer of the hesychast tradition and the translator of the Philokalia. He lived far from the Synodal structures — on Mount Athos and in Moldavia — and his spirituality draws largely from the deep wells of the ancient monastic Tradition. He stood closer to the sources than most of his contemporaries from the Synodal church. Through him, providence spoke both to those who were close to the true Tradition and to those who had departed from it. His testimony concerning the revival of the Orthodox kingdom carries the greatest spiritual weight among all post-schism prophecies — precisely because his source was less contaminated by Western influences.

3.5. The General Theological Meaning of the Permitted Prophecies

Thus, God's providence has arranged that prophecies about the Russian Tsar sound from all lips — both from the lips of the true keepers of the Tradition and from the lips of those who departed from it. This is no accident. It is testimony to the fact that the Truth about the Tsar-Katechon is a universal Truth which no error can silence. The Lord desires that all — the faithful and the erring — should be capable of recognising their Tsar when he comes.

Those who believe in the New Rite traditions, who have heard the prophecies of Seraphim, John of Kronstadt, and Theophan of Poltava — let them know: these prophecies were permitted for you, so that you might have faith. But when the true Tsar comes, he will not come to restore the Nikonian reform. He will come to restore what existed before it. And then the prophecies in which you believed will find their true fulfilment — a fulfilment more complete than you could have imagined.

CHAPTER IV. WHAT THE TRUE TSAR-KATECHON IS ACCORDING TO THE TRADITION

4.1. The Tsar as Confessor of the Apostolic Tradition

The true Orthodox Tsar-Katechon is first of all a confessor — a man who personally preserves and confesses the undamaged apostolic Tradition. Not Orthodox in the sense of cultural belonging, but Orthodox in the sense of living and effective faithfulness to that Tradition which was passed down from the Apostles, confirmed by the Ecumenical Councils, and preserved in the ancient Orthodoxy despite every persecution.

Holy Scripture gives the image of the true sovereign in Deuteronomy: "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book... And he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law" (Deut. 17:18–19). The Law of God and the Tradition of the Church as its living unfolding — this is the foundation of the Orthodox kingdom.

4.2. The Signs of the True Tsar According to the Tradition

According to Scripture and Tradition, the true Tsar-Katechon is recognised by the following signs. First: he personally confesses and preserves the undamaged apostolic Tradition — the two-fingered sign of the Cross, the ancient liturgy, the name Isus. Second: he restores the conciliarity of the Church, destroyed by the Nikonian reforms and finally annihilated by Peter I through the Synodal system. Third: he acknowledges the illegitimacy of the anathemas of the Great Moscow Council of 1666–1667, which cursed the apostolic rites contrary to the decrees of the preceding Councils. Fourth: he protects the keepers of the Tradition — those who were persecuted as schismatics, when in truth they were confessors of the Truth.

4.3. The Symphony of Kingdom and Church

The Orthodox kingdom is founded upon symphony — the accord of royal power and the Church that preserves the Truth. Not the subjugation of the Church to the state, as in the Synodal period; and not the papal domination of the spiritual over the temporal.

The Epanagoge of Emperor Basil I and Patriarch Photius (around 880 AD) expressed this principle: "The Emperor is the lawful authority, commanding all things to the common good... The Patriarch is the living image of Christ, expressing the Truth in deed and word." The partnership of the two principles under the sovereignty of the Truth over both.

CHAPTER V. 1917 — THE REMOVAL OF THE KATECHON AND THE PATH TO RESTORATION

5.1. Revolution as a Consequence of Spiritual Weakening

The Revolution of 1917 is a consequence, not a cause. The cause reaches back to 1666–1667, when the Great Moscow Council cursed the apostolic Tradition. Then: Peter I abolished the patriarchate in 1721 — the conciliar principle was destroyed. The Synodal system turned the Church into a department of state. Theological education followed Western scholastic models. By the early twentieth century, the Orthodox kingdom retained only the outward signs of the Katechon — its inward content had been in large measure emptied.

5.2. The Path to Restoration Through Repentance

The restoration of the Katechon will not begin with political victories. It will begin with repentance: with the acknowledgement that the Nikonian reforms were a departure from the apostolic Tradition, that the Great Council of 1666–1667 pronounced an unlawful anathema upon true piety, that the Synodal system destroyed the conciliarity of the Church. This repentance must precede the manifestation of the true Tsar — for the Tsar does not come into emptiness, but to where the people and the Church are ready to receive him.

The Apostle Peter proclaimed: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). The times of refreshing — and with them the Tsar — will come after repentance. Such is the law of providence.

CONCLUSION. A CALL TO PRAYER, DISCERNMENT, AND FAITHFULNESS

This Manifesto is written not to divide people, but to discern spirits. Discernment is a spiritual gift without which it is impossible to recognise the true Tsar when he appears — for in his place may come many who shelter behind his name.

Those who preserve the ancient Orthodox Tradition have the direct prophetic witness of their saints concerning the coming Tsar-Katechon. This witness comes from an unclouded source — from those who did not betray the Tradition and testified to it with their blood.

Those who believe within New Rite traditions also have prophecies about the Tsar. These prophecies were permitted to them by the Lord precisely so that they too might have faith in him. This is the mercy of God: even from within a framework of error, the Lord draws forth a seed of Truth and casts it into the hearts of men.

When the true Orthodox Tsar-Katechon comes — he will be recognised by the chief sign: by faithfulness to the apostolic Tradition, by the two-fingered sign of the Cross, by the name Isus upon his lips, by the restoration of the conciliarity of the Church, by his defence of those who were persecuted for faithfulness to the Truth. All prophecies — both those of the true keepers of the Tradition and those permitted to those who erred — will find in him their fulfilment. A complete fulfilment. One that will surpass every human expectation.

Therefore the call of this Manifesto is threefold: preserve the Tradition — pray for the Tsar — discern the true from the permitted. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13). And further: "Even so, come, Lord Isus" (Rev. 22:20) — for He Who is the Truth is coming, and with Him comes His true kingdom.

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May the Lord preserve His faithful ones and open the eyes of those who seek the Truth. Amen.